On 23 September I sat behind Lina al-Hathloul as she delivered a statement to the 42nd session of the Human Rights Council (pg 4). Lina was there fighting for the freedom of her older sister, Loujain, who has been imprisoned for over 500 days now in Saudi Arabia. The bravery and resilience that Lina displayed during her time in Geneva was nothing short of humbling. Lina is 24 years old - yet she has no choice but to fight for her sister’s freedom. Doing so places her and her family at risk, but if they stay silent, the Saudi government tortures Loujain.

“I thought that all the problems [of the world] were really far from me—but now that my sister is in prison, I understand that injustice is everywhere…. I can promise things will change for the better if [people] act.” – Lina al-Hathloul

Dear community, supporters and readers - I start our third quarter report with these words because I can think of no better reminder of the collective power of our voices and this movement. This past quarter we celebrated gains: New South Wales in Australia decriminalised abortion after 119 years (WM Sydney, pg 3)! and, Nuril Makun – an Indonesian teacher sentenced to 6 months in prison after recording an exchange with the headteacher who sexually harassed her – was released thanks to international advocacy (WM Milan, pg 3).

But we have also seen a worrying loss of our collective rights - the illegal occupation of Kashmir by the Indian government (pg 6), the declaration that there is no international right to abortion by the United States and 19 other member states at the United Nations (pg 5), and the continued imprisonment and silencing of Women Human Rights defenders globally.

In September we released our 2020 Strategy (pg 7) and we laid out an honest reality: While grassroots movements are the launching point of systemic change, they continue to be underfunded, under resourced, and undervalued for their impact. But we also carved a bold vision for the path forward. As always, our Global Community, coalition partners, and allies responded to the call and in the next quarter we will work with you all to produce a workable call to action.

As we look to the last three months of this year and this decade I invite you all to join the call to our annual Global March. Let’s start 2020 with a renewed commitment to collective action and solidarity. As always we look forward to continuing to listen, mobilise, and move forward with each and every one of you.

In Community and Solidarity,

[Signature]
WM Kupang launched a campaign to educate people on consent and 'stealthing', which refers to the removal of or damage to a condom during sexual intercourse without agreement from both parties. The campaign encouraged the public to engage in conversations and educate people about these issues.

WM Bamenda has been working tirelessly to deal with the fallout of the ongoing conflict in Cameroon. In Q2 they held a training session with women on how to give CPR and treat gunshot wounds. In Q3 they released an article providing detailed insight into the current situation in Cameroon and called for the need for immediate humanitarian intervention.
WM Milan joined efforts with Indonesian activists worldwide in advocating for the release and amnesty of Nuril Maknun - an Indonesian teacher who was sentenced to 6 months in prison after recording an exchange with the headteacher who sexually harassed her. Thanks to international advocacy - Makun was released.

In Australia, WM Sydney mobilised thousands of people in New South Wales multiple times over this past quarter to unite in support of the right to legal abortion. Thanks in part to their tireless awareness and advocacy campaign, abortion has been decriminalised in the largest state in Australia after 119 years. WM Zurich united in solidarity with WM Sydney - holding a rally in support early September 2019.
CAMPAIGNS

Free Saudi Activists

Saudi Arabia has continued to violate the rights of women’s human rights defenders. Those who fought for the lift of the driving ban are still jailed after 500 days in prison. In August we learned that the Saudi government offered Loujain al-Hathloul freedom in exchange for a denial that they tortured her. She refused.

“I think people don’t really realize the power we have with our voices. Speaking up once makes maybe three or four of your friends speak up afterwards and it’s a domino [effect]. If they just make the effort to be in solidarity with this woman once or twice, things could change really fast. I think they have to take the time to read about it and be brave and just speak up.

I can promise things will change for the better if they act.”

Listen to Lina’s powerful statement delivered at the council session and read her interview with our Executive Director in Ms. Magazine.

Women’s March Global also coordinated a side event with Lina and Michel Forst, the U.N.’s Special Rapporteur on the situation of Human Rights Defenders.

Additionally we mobilised the public to take action and hold governments accountable to stand in support of upholding women’s human rights in Saudi Arabia.

WE CANNOT STAY SILENT.
Our campaign – **My Human Right to Bodily Autonomy** continued during the 3rd Quarter culminating on 28 Sep, the International Day to Safe Access to Abortion.

In recognition of the 28th of September – Women’s March Global partnered with Amnesty International and wrote a joint *Op-Ed published in TIME magazine* calling for greater focus on the impact abortion bans have on women’s human rights.

> “Any person who does not control what happens to their body cannot be free.”
> 
> *in TIME Magazine*

Additionally we jointly led a **global day of action** advocating for sexual health and reproductive rights.

Women’s March Global’s petition to support and unite for abortion rights worldwide as we mobilised for a Global Day of Solidarity on 28 September closed out with **signatories from 57 countries around the world.**
On **5 August, the Indian government revoked Article 370** and illegally occupied Kashmir, increasing the number of troops in the already heavily militarised province. The Indian government, **severed all forms of communication** from Kashmir, cutting off millions of families from their loved ones. The heavy presence of military forces has forced schools to close and has enormously impacted the local economy, especially weavers and traders.

Women’s March Global partnered with **Stand With Kashmir** — a Kashmiri, diaspora-driven independent, global citizen, grassroots group committed to standing in solidarity with the people of Kashmir in ending the occupation and supporting their right to self-determination. Together, we have produced a webinar mini-course series to help inform people on the occupation and the history of Kashmir. Already our three webinars have over 12,000 views on Facebook alone!
Released in September 2019, the 2020 Strategy laid out the current reality of non-profits in the women’s rights space, along with our vision for the way forward.

Our words were well-received, with both large foundations and grassroots activists thanking us for our honesty. Radical transparency is at the core of our values and we will continue to be open about the challenges we face both internally and collectively as a movement.

This next quarter, we are working with our Community to develop a workable call to action, so we can all take concrete steps to realise the vision for our path forward.

THE CURRENT REALITY

Our communities face **BARRIERS TO ENTRY** from prerequisite knowledge to exclusionary hierarchical practices.

Women’s rights remain **UNDERFUNDED**. Organisations are **FORCED TO COMPETE FOR FUNDING**, including with big, international NGOs.

This **IMPACTS OUR ABILITY TO INVEST IN DEEPLY INTERSECTIONAL ORGANISING**.

and;

It **EXTINGUISHES COLLABORATION, COALITION BUILDING, and HOLISTIC THINKING/ACTION**.

THE WAY FORWARD

**WE ARE ALL WELCOMED TO DO OUR PART.** A movement that is open and accessible to anyone, anywhere in the world concerned about the state of women’s human rights.

**MEAN WHAT WE SAY.** Every choice centres the voices, knowledge, and experiences of those most marginalised. This includes the full spectrum of gender identities and expressions.

**THE LONG GAME OF BEHAVIOUR CHANGE.** Careful, thoughtful, consistent actions, large and small, highly visible and everyday, to changes people’s behaviours and minds.
What’s Next in 2020?

On 18 January 2020, join the fourth annual march of Women’s March Global. Women’s reproductive, sexual and human rights are experiencing a massive rollback around the world so next year’s event, March for Our Human Rights, will focus on bodily autonomy, which is the right to self-governance over one’s own body without coercion or external pressures. This includes abortion rights, sexual health and reproductive rights, sexual consent, period equality, family planning, medical treatments, and more. Stay tuned for more news!

The Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) is leading the effort for the Women’s Global Strike on International Women’s Day, 8 March 2020. Women’s March Global has joined the global strike campaign committee, to assist in leading mobilisation and communication efforts globally. Stay tuned for developments!

Women’s March Global and Minority Veterans of America are uniting to hold the first ever Global Women Veterans Convening in April 2020. Our Executive Director, Uma Mishra-Newbery, is herself a veteran of the U.S. Army. Uma is proud to draw attention to the experiences and stories of veterans globally. The Convening will be focused on the impact of militarisation on climate change, indigenous rights, toxic masculinity and its effects, colonisation and more.